

**Meeting of Council  
Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014  
Dickson Room**



## **Minutes**

### **Attendance**

Present: David Coutts (Meeting Chairman), Dennis Ayliffe, Glenys Bishop, Anne Campbell, Jan Finley, Lesley Jackman, Marion Jones, Warwick Wright

Ex officio: Judy West, Peter Byron, Steve Speer

Special Guest: Sally Barnes, Director National Parks Australia

Apologies: John Connolly, Alan Munns, Anne Phillips, Barbara Podger

### **1. Opening**

The meeting was opened by the President, David Coutts, at 1:35 PM.

### **2. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings**

**Motion:** That the minutes of the previous Council meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2014 be accepted.

*Proposed:* David Coutts. *Seconded:* Marion Jones. *Carried.*

**Motion:** That the minutes of the special meeting of Elected Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2014 be accepted.

*Proposed:* David Coutts. *Seconded:* Lesley Jackman. *Carried.*

### **3. Meeting with Director of National Parks**

Sally Barnes, the recently appointed Director of National Parks (appointed 3 months ago), was present for one hour and a useful exchange of information ensued. Her background and experience is particularly relevant to her current position, as she has been in the Environment Field for 20 years in a number of roles in NSW (eg EPA, National Parks, Office of Environment and Heritage).

David initially provided an overview of the history of the Friends of ANBG, their objectives and their evolving role, noting our commitment and dedication to working for the ANBG and with its management team. Sally, in turn, stressed the increasing importance of partnerships (Government/Private Sector) and that the role of the Friends was particularly relevant in this context. The challenges of having to operate in a resource-constrained environment were discussed. In due course, we hope to show her some of the Gardens via a guided tour on Flora Explorer. She was also receptive to giving a talk in the Thursday Public Talks Series.

### **4. Matters arising from Minutes of Meetings**

#### **4.1 Review of VIC volunteer activity**

- The document had been circulated to Council for comments and these had been collated by David Coutts and sent to Peter Byron
- Council accepted the recommended approach in Part 6 of the report but noted some points in relation to implementation of the recommended approach
  - All volunteers under the program should be members of the Friends
  - Training is a key element and this needs some further development, especially stronger links with the guides
  - More prominent badges and possibly shirts or sashes should be considered for the volunteers
  - This needs to be seen as a joint Gardens/Friends program and an ongoing consultation mechanism needs to be put in place involving a nominee of the Friends

#### **4.2 Summer concerts**

- This had been discussed in detail at the Special Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, where it had been agreed by Council to

support the 2015 Summer Concert series, in principle, recognizing that there was some risk and it might be necessary to underwrite a loss.

- Support for the Summer Concerts met a key aim of the Friends, highlighted in the Strategic Plan (2010-2015), to promote the Gardens to the Public.
- It was stressed, again, that there be close liaison between the Major Events Committee and the Friends Social Events Committee on all decisions relating to the concert organization, so that there were no unexpected additional costs, other than those budgeted.
- An entry fee (rather than a donation) was strongly favoured and is likely to be \$5 for adults (no concessions), \$2 for students and no charge for children (accompanied by an adult). The advice of the Social Events and Activities Committee on this point was requested. This change will need to be communicated via advertising for the event. The entry fee is unlikely to attract GST as the income for the Friends is less than \$150,000 pa.
- Sponsorship will be sought, and this can be in the name of the Friends if that is helpful. Lesley Jackman has agreed to liaise with ANBG Management on this.

## 5. General Business

### 5.1 Alpine Project

- A symposium will be held on 12<sup>th</sup> April in the Crosbie Morrison Building to review findings from the current project and identify strategic directions for future research and the possibility of seeking a further ARC grant.
- Invitations have been dispatched to ANU, ANBG staff, Friends of ANBG (which includes Council and members of Plant Science Group and there is an allocation of up to 20 places based on order of registration).
- The Symposium findings will be printed and included in a special Fronds supplement; ANU has agreed to contribute to the costs. The Friends have been asked to contribute towards the printing and also to a reception (self-catered) at the end of the Symposium.

**Motion:** That Council support the provision of funding of up to \$1500 to contribute to the cost of a special Fronds supplement about the Alpine Project Symposium and the post-Symposium reception.

*Proposed:* David Coutts. *Seconded:* Dennis Ayliffe. *Carried.*

### 5.2 Flora Explorer Program Review

- The Review had been circulated to Council just before the meeting.
- There appeared to be no major concerns but comments by Council Members were to be forwarded directly to Steve Speer (copied to David Coutts).
- For matters pertaining to the Guides, Glenys Bishop, Convenor of Guides, will be available to discuss these in May but will be away in June.
- Marion Jones advised she had already implemented one of the recommendations with the purchase of larger blankets for use in winter; these will be stored in the locked seat box by the VIC, with the key put on the same ring as the Flora Explorer key.

### 5.3 Fronds August Issue

- The next issue will be available by mid-August.
- The deadlines for this are:
  - Articles – 11<sup>th</sup> June
  - Gardens Shorts and Friends' Briefs – 16<sup>th</sup> July
  - What's on – 23<sup>rd</sup> July
- Material is to be sent to [newsletter@friendsanbg.org.au](mailto:newsletter@friendsanbg.org.au), as usual.

## 6. Reports

### 6.1 Executive Director

- Asteraceae Garden preparation is well underway.
  - The area has been opened up with the removal of several trees.
  - Soil left from the excavations for the Red Centre Garden will be used as fill; as well as some of the rocks.
  - A hand book is to be written about the plants in the Asteraceae Garden by several Guides; it will be similar to that prepared for the Red Centre Garden.
  - Large numbers of plants from a large number of species are being grown in the Nursery (100

plants/species).

- Rain Forest Gully lower boardwalk is being replaced.
  - This will occur from late May until early July.
  - Tenders for this closed on 5<sup>th</sup> May.
- Collaboration across National Parks -
  - Tom North and Joe McAuliffe (ANBG) had spent one week training staff on Christmas Island in seed collecting and nursery matters and there had been a return visit from the Christmas Island Nursery Manager to ANBG.
  - Considerable damage to the forests, boardwalks and booby nesting sites had been caused by a cyclone that hit Christmas Island. Two rangers from Kakadu National Park had recently spent two weeks helping to clear the debris (with chain saws).
  - Tom North (ANBG) has recently spent 2 weeks in Kakadu training staff there in seed collecting techniques.
- Genetic basis of threatened species will focus on looking at the genetic representation of threatened species in the ANBG Rainforest Gully (i.e. number of plants in ANBG derived from what number of plants in the wild).
- A proposal is being developed for submission to the ACT Government with respect to conservation and seed collection.
- Consideration is being given to the development of a “Nucleus Group” of younger people (ANU, UC); this is an area of interest to the Friends as well.

## 6.2 General Manager

- Building works in the Administration and Botany Buildings are almost finished.
- Shortly, Anna Monroe and Cheryl Backhouse will move from the Ellis Rowan Building and Steve Speers’ group will occupy the space so vacated. Staff in the Franklin Building will then move into the Ellis Rowan Building leaving the Franklin Building empty and available to be rented out to suitable tenants.
- Parliamentary Secretary, Environment, has agreed to increase the ANBG Parking fees to \$3/hour and \$11/day from 1<sup>st</sup> July, in line with charges in the Parliamentary Zone.

## 6.3 Friends Liaison

- Staff:
  - Dan Carmody has returned after a period on Christmas Island
  - Bronwyn Copp has returned from time in the Environment Department, but due to an injury will be on reduced hours for a while.
- Artists-in-residence.
  - Julie McEnergy, an artist from Tropical North Queensland, who works with the Cairns Botanical Gardens, will speak at the Thursday Talk on 8<sup>th</sup> May and also run two Botanical Art workshops (10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May).
  - In addition, two artists Anne Miron and Sally Blake will run workshops (10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May) on the art of weaving, plaiting and dyeing fabrics with natural plant dyes.
- Human Brochure 101 with ACT Tourism:
  - 101 locals are to be selected from applicants to be shown a range of places in Canberra and encouraged to give their feedback to their social media “friends”.
  - Guides are being asked to participate – taking people on an evening tour, from 6.30 pm to 8 pm on 30<sup>th</sup> May, from the Rainforest to the Red Centre Garden with refreshments at the Red Centre Garden. Training will be on 12<sup>th</sup> May in the early evening.

## 6.4 Treasurer

- The Treasurer noted that the net profit from the Botanical Art Group’s Annual Art Exhibition for 2014 was \$2,403.
- All the Treasurer’s Reports are now available on the new Friends data base.
- The receipts and outgoings for April 2014 were noted.

**Motion:** That the financial statements for April 2014 and the Botanical Art Group’s Exhibition be accepted

*Proposed:* David Coutts. *Seconded:* Anne Campbell. *Carried.*

## 6.5 Secretary

- The list of Correspondence (in and out) had been circulated, along with the list of Committee Reports.
- There had been no response from Government House to the invitation to Lady Lynne Cosgrove to become the Patron of the Friends of the ANBG.

**Action:** David Coutts will investigate whether Lady Cosgrove is able to accept the invitation to become Patron of the Friends of ANBG.

## 6.6 Friends Group Reports

### 6.6.1 Botanical Art Group Exhibition

- See 6.5 for financial information. The Friends had also purchased two paintings which will be given to the ANBG for display.

### 6.6.2 Membership Report for April 2014

- Current memberships are 1415 with the **number** of members 1839; 202 members have not renewed.
- Council approved the draft of the letter to new members noting that the sentence:
  - “Volunteer Guides: Friends can receive training to become Volunteer Guides” needed to clarify that training courses are run about every two years.

**Action:** Glenys Bishop will liaise with the Membership Team on the exact wording.

- Also included in the letter are the changes to the free parking which will now be for 3 hours rather than all day. Caution about keeping the Parking Permit safe is also included as it will become increasingly difficult to replace.

### 6.6.3 Friends Around the Lake

- David Coutts noted that the Group seems keener and more widely supported than in 2013 with a number of events likely to be offered by the various institutions throughout the year. It provides wider opportunities of events for Friends of these institutions to attend each other’s functions.
- ANBG Friends could offer Breakfast with the Birds, as in 2013 and perhaps a special event based on the Red Centre Garden late in the year, with drinks and nibbles while listening to a talk and then guided walks through the Red Centre Garden.
  - There will be liaison with Steve Speer on this event

### 6.6.4 Asteraceae Working Group

- Don Beer, Friends Council representative, reported that Naarilla Hirsch, Jonette McDonnell and himself, with other guides, will jointly prepare a handbook for use of guides along the lines of that previously developed for the Red Centre Garden.
- It will be based on or include the text of an excellent short talk that Dr Alexander Schmidt-Lebhun, Asteraceae expert, from the Centre for National Biodiversity Research, gave to the Working Group in April.
- The Interpretation Sub-group will make specific recommendations to the next meeting of the Working Group (7<sup>th</sup> May) about the themes to be developed in the garden.
- Signs will be developed, including one acknowledging the support of the Friends.

The meeting closed at 3.45 pm.

David Coutts  
President.

Approved      3 June 2014